

Seven Golden Etiquettes for Seekers of Knowledge



It was related by Anas bin Malik that the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim.” [*Sunan Ibn Mâjah*]

However, as with all things in our Deen, there are proper ways of going about doing things. We have a certain way of taking wudhu, making salaah, tasbeeh, zikr, fasting and hajj.

Here we give you 7 etiquettes for knowledge seekers in sha Allah:

1. Have a sincere intention

An example is: I am studying to help the ummah with this beneficial knowledge, to enlighten my intellectual growth and that of others with this beneficial knowledge, drawing closer to Allah ﷻ as a result.

It is very important that we have good intentions because it is narrated that Umar bin al-Khattab, رضي الله عنه, said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, say:

“Actions are (judged) by motives/ intention (niyyah), so each man will have what he intended. Thus, he whose migration (hijrah) was to Allah and His Messenger, his migration is to Allah and His Messenger; but he whose migration was for some worldly thing he might gain, or for a wife he might marry, his migration is to that for which he migrated.” [*Al-Bukhari*]

2. Study with ihsaan (excellence)

Grand intentions require grand efforts. We must strive to study to the best of our ability and aim for excellence, not perfection. Research shows that perfectionism triggers anxiety and leads to procrastination. Alhamdulillah, Allah ﷻ prescribed excellence and not perfection in all our works.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Verily, Allah has prescribed Ihsan towards everything. Therefore, when you kill, kill in the best manner. When you slaughter, slaughter in the best manner. Let one of you sharpen his knife and give ease to his animal.” [Muslim]

3. Exhibit tawakkul (reliance upon Allah)

While doing our best, we must rely upon Allah ﷻ

for the results. We must trust that He will make things easy for us and will grant us success.

This is an essential etiquette for seeking knowledge and in every endeavor we undertake because we acknowledge that any success that comes our way is through Allah ﷻ

alone and is not a result of our efforts. Allah ﷻ has said:

“I am as my slave expects Me to be.” (Agreed upon). Imam an-Nawawi (may Allah ﷻ be pleased with him) commented on this, saying: ***“The scholars say that expecting the best of Allah is to expect that He will have Mercy on him and relieve him of hardship.”***

4. Eliminate bad habits or manners

and stay away from sins and the routes that lead to them. Imam Shaafi'i complained to his teacher, Waqi, about his weak memory and his teacher advised him to stop committing sins, adding that knowledge is the light of Allah ﷻ and Allah ﷻ does not grant His light to sinners. Thus, we must identify our bad habits or sins and work hard to eliminate them from our lives, while seeking Allah's ﷻ help.

5. Thank Allah ﷻ

especially when you have learned something well or have completed your study. Allah ﷻ says that if we are thankful to Him, He will grant us more out of His bounty:

“And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: “If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My Blessings), but if you are thankless (i.e.

disbelievers), verily! My Punishment is indeed severe.” [Quran: Chapter 14, verse 7]

6. Engage in istighfaar and dhikrullah

Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah  have mercy on him) said:

“When I am confused in my understanding of an issue in religion, I forthwith beseech Allah to forgive me one thousand times – maybe a little more or maybe a little less. Then, Allah opens what was closed for me and I come to understand.”

7. Make dua to Allah

to help you to study with ihsaan and to make things easy for you. To combat laziness, supplicate:

“Allaahumma innee a’oodhu bika minal-hammi wal-ḥazani, wal-‘ajzi wal-kasali, wal-bukhli, wal-jubni, wa ḍala’id-dayni, wa ghalabatir-rijaal”

meaning: **O Allah, I take refuge in You from anxiety, and sorrow, and weakness, and laziness, and miserliness, and cowardice, and the burden of debts and from being overpowered by men.**

If you encounter any difficulty, supplicate:

“Allahumma la sahla illa ma ja’altahu sahla, wa ‘anta taj-alul hazna idha shi’ta sahla”

meaning: O Allah! There is nothing easy except what You make easy, and You make the difficult easy if it be Your Will.

Supplicate to Allah  to increase you in knowledge:

” Rabbi zidnee ‘ilma”, meaning “O my Lord, increase me in knowledge.”

May all seekers of knowledge find the path to Jannah in sha Allah. What are your tips for seeking beneficial knowledge? Share with us by leaving a comment below!

About the Author:

Brother Ali Ruqaya is one of the pioneers of the Muslim community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). He has helped to establish some of the longest running Muslim schools in the GTA, such as the ISNA Elementary School and Madresatul Banaat Almuslimaat. Brother Ali has been serving the Muslim community in the GTA and abroad for over 38 years. Some of his volunteer work includes visiting the sick in hospitals across the GTA, and building bridges by sitting on an interfaith committee. Brother Ali also gives khutbas (sermons) regularly in different mosques around the GTA and speaks at fundraisers and other events. Currently, Brother Ali is the Head Counselor at Madresatul Banaat Almuslimaat. He often travels to the Middle East and other parts of the world to raise funds for the school as well as to support those that are less fortunate in our community to attend the madrasa at a subsidy.